

**Martin, Al**

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**From:** Scott Thornton [sbthornton@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 02, 2009 3:09 PM  
**To:** Rummel, Marsha; rr dickwagner@gmail.com  
**Cc:** Martin, Al  
**Subject:** Edgewater Hotel Project

Marsha/Dick –

I'm not sure if you will see this prior to tonight's UDC meeting or not, but still wanted to quickly relay some of my concerns about the proposed redevelopment of the Edgewater hotel. The project has both pluses and minuses and while I agree that the redevelopment has the potential to be a boost to business and the economy in our downtown, there are two basic concerns that I hope are addressed:

1) The Mansion Hill District is Madison's oldest historic district and was established to protect the many beautiful homes in the district. I've never believed that Madison has fully embraced its historic districts. I think this is very wrong. Our historic districts should not be ignored. I applaud the proposal for restoring the historic Art Moderne hotel, but am concerned about the height of the new tower.

I lived in the Mansion Hill district for over 10 years before moving to the Third Lake Ridge historic district and was involved in saving the Quisling Clinic building. This district is very vulnerable to "progress" and disregarding the ordinances in favor of an out-of-scale tower does pose a real threat to the district. The project would be a better fit for the Mansion Hill district if it was more in scale with the existing buildings and within the height limitations.

2) The Lake Mendota vista should be protected. Anyone cresting the hill on Wisconsin Avenue, whether by car, bus, bike or on foot, is greeted with a picturesque vista of the lake. It is one of the best public views of the lake from within the city and on a warm sunny day with sailboats out, is really quite breathtaking. This view is something that I think many people just take for granted.

I don't agree that being "allowed" to descend to the lake via a stairway or to stand on a parking structure to view the lake is either a benefit or substitute for the public view we currently enjoy. Once that is gone, it is gone. This vista must be maintained if the project is allowed to move forward.

Please consider these concerns in your review of the project before the Urban Design Commission.

Sincerely,

Scott B. Thornton  
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Madison, WI

*WJ Handout 9-2-09 No. 3*